



## **Red River Watershed Management Board**

### ***Board of Managers***

John Finney, President-Humboldt Todd Miller-Warroad Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo  
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Greg Holmvik-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton  
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

## **RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING**

**April 19, 2011**

**Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota**

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Todd Miller	Dan Money
Ron Osowski	Orville Knott
Daniel Wilkens	Greg Holmvik
Jerome Deal	

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR\*CS
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Henry VanOffelen, MCEA
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
- Congressman Collin Peterson
- Sharon Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office
- Valerie Gravseth, Senator Franken's office
- Andy Martin, Senator Klobuchar's office
- Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Mike Bakken, Engineer, JMB Engineering, Inc.
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator

Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Specialist  
Duane Erickson, Wild Rice WD  
Twyla Altepeter  
Brian Borgen  
Eric Zurn

An update from Congressman Collin Peterson was added to the agenda under *Red River Retention Authority*.

**Motion** by Manager Money to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Miller to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

### **Red River Retention Authority (3RA)**

D. Thul, Red River Coordinator, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the prioritization process options for consideration by the 3RA. A Joint MN/ND Advisory Committee was developed relative to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). The committee was directed by the 3RA to develop a prioritization process for projects eligible to receive federal funding through the 3RA. The following objectives were identified by the committee to be included in the prioritization process: reduce flows on the Red River main stem, reduce flows on the major tributaries, reduce flood damages, maximize storage capacity and detention times, willing landowners, and the Red River Basin Commission's (RRBC) Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) goals.

A tool developed by the RRBC is the MIKE 11 main stem flow routing model. This model could be utilized to reduce all upstream tributaries' flood flows by a certain amount so when all flood flows are combined they equal a 20% reduction at the seven main stem points. Another tool is the Prioritization Worksheet developed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the RRWMB which consists of a point system for various categories as a method of ranking projects. Another calculation utilized by the RRWMB is the Star Value Method which provides a relative value to a project's potential to achieve the goal of reducing peak main stem flows. The relative value assigned to a project is based on the amount of floodwater storage the project provides and on the length of time it can be stored.

Congressman Peterson reported that Congressman Frank Lucas of Oklahoma replaced him as Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and he's now a ranking-member on the committee. He stated that a budget was recently passed in the House which indicates that the Farm Bill will have to be reduced by \$178 billion which will increase the difficulty of earmarking federal funds for the Red River basin. He further noted that he'd prefer the federal appropriation be administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The Congressman stated that he discussed the proposed federal appropriation for the 3RA with Senator Kent Conrad. He added that Senator Conrad helped draft the 2008 Farm Bill and the Senator indicated he's committed to working with Chairwoman Stabenow and other members of the Senate Agriculture Committee to achieve bipartisan support for the 2012 Farm Bill. The Congressman noted that Senator Conrad plans to move the bill this fall in the Senate, with support from Senators Hoeven and Klobuchar.

The establishment of a new USACE position located in the Red River basin was discussed. Manager Deal reported that the 3RA is considering leasing office space in the Fargo-Moorhead area which could also include offices for representatives from the USACE and the NRCS. He noted that a similar USACE position was developed with the North Dakota Department of Transportation which has proven to be successful. The Congressman added that the Omaha district of the USACE is considering relinquishing their permitting authority in the Red River basin and requesting all regulatory decisions be directed to the St. Paul district.

Congressman Peterson noted his concern about the 3RA addressing the flooding issue in Devils Lake. Manager Finney reported that the 3RA had briefly discussed the flooding in Devils Lake and determined that due to its complexity, it would be infeasible for the Authority to address the problem.

Congressman Peterson reported that Dave White, Chief of the USDA-NRCS, has appropriated \$10 million to assist eligible landowners in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota to reduce flooding, restore wetlands and enhance wildlife habitat in the Red River Valley Watershed through the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

Manager Finney referenced the original proposal to be included in the 2012 Farm Bill which would incorporate a \$50 million annual appropriation for flood water storage projects in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota with a goal to achieve 1,000,000 acre-feet of storage to reduce flooding on the main stem of the Red River. He explained that the current tax levy of the RRWMB generates ~ \$3.5 million in revenue, however, should the Buffalo-Red River WD and the Otter Tail Watershed join the membership ~ \$5 million would be levied to provide the local match.

C. Fritz, Director, International Water Institute, distributed Briefing Paper No. 1 developed by the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC). The BTSAC is proposing a two-phased approach to investigate tile/subsurface drainage impacts on peak flows with the goal of developing policy recommendations for the 3RA that reduce the amount of water contributing to the peak period of flood hydrographs.

Manager Finney inquired about the timeline to complete the two-phased proposal. C. Fritz responded that phase 1 would require 4 months to complete and phase 2 would require 20 months to complete, for a total of 24 months or 2 years to complete the entire proposal. **Motion** by Manager Money to authorize the two-phased approach to investigate tile/subsurface drainage impacts with an estimated cost of \$60,000 to be shared equally with the Red River Joint Water Resource District, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

M. Meister reviewed the public information monthly report. Activities for the month of April included writing four feature articles. He also assisted in coordinating the media for the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Conference including providing follow up information and interview coordination after the conference.

M. Meister distributed a letter of resignation for his duties as RRWMB Public Information Officer. He stated that he was recently selected as chair of the NDSU Department of Communication and director of the School of Natural Resources Management. His new position will begin July 1, 2011 and as a result he is required to end his consulting work. Prior to his resignation, a series of proposals will be developed for future RRWMB public information initiatives.

#### **TSAC Paper No. 14**

Henry VanOffelen, MCEA, conducted a presentation on TSAC Paper No. 14 (TP14). He stated that the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group directed TSAC to develop natural resource enhancement (NRE) criteria to be used in conjunction with securing 75:25 state cost-share funding for flood damage reduction (FDR) projects.

Manager Finney noted his concern relative to adopting the document as it could increase the length of time required for a project to progress through the project team process at a time when the 3RA and its various committees are developing recommendations to streamline permitting requirements in an effort to construct flood damage reduction projects in a timelier manner. He added that individuals promoting TP14 have downplayed the time requirement for project teams to implement its stipulations. Previously the RRWMB directed the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to individually complete a worksheet that provided an estimate of the total number of project team meetings required to complete the NRE development process proposed within TP14. The project teams that can meet only bi-monthly for four effective hours will require an additional 3+ years to develop projects when implementing TP14. Even when meeting every month without failure – a considerable achievement especially during winter months – TP14 still adds ~ 1½ years to the project development process.

N. Drees added that TP14 provides for a process to incorporate NREs into FDR projects. He stated that a significant amount of time was expended by the project team regarding the Brandt/Angus Flood Control Project in an effort to obtain state agency endorsement prior to utilizing TP14.

Manager Finney referred to the letter he directed N. Erickson to develop stating the board's opposition to TP14. Manager Deal noted that the questions included in the letter need to be addressed by TSAC prior to its adoption. **Motion** by Manager Holmvik to authorize sending the letter which states the RRWMB's opposition to TP14 to the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Manager Finney suggested that the board may want to consider directing TP14 and the associated potential implications of the mediation agreement to the board's legal counsel for review. N. Erickson suggested retaining C. Anderson, Widseth, Smith & Nolting, to participate with future TSAC reviews of TP14, as well as attend future Work Group meetings. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize retaining C. Anderson to participate in future TSAC and Work Group meetings, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. A bonding hearing was conducted during the Minnesota Association of Watershed District's (MAWD) Legislative Reception & Day at the Capitol on March 23-24, 2011. The same basic bill of \$55,000,000 was introduced in both the House and Senate which included all the RRWMB projects as well as member district community projects. The WDs present at the hearing had an opportunity to provide information on their respective projects.

R. Harnack reported that a legislative tour and meeting was conducted in the Red River basin on April 8, 2011. Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee and Sen. Dave Senjem, Chair of the Capital Investment Committee conducted a tour of flood control projects and also the current flooding situation. In addition to touring North Ottawa, a hearing was conducted in Moorhead with presentations from J. Finney on mediation funding and the farmstead ring dike program and two schools regarding the River Watch program.

R. Harnack discussed TP14. He reported that based on his review, TP14 could help project teams integrate NRE elements into FDR projects. He stated that as WDs try to optimize the 75:25 cost-share for FDR projects with the state, these evaluations and assessments could be beneficial. He added that he did not believe that adopting TP14 would result in a longer project development process, but could result in a more efficient process of developing integrated and complimentary NREs to FDR projects. He further stated that TP14 could also be used as a guide to WDs as they update their watershed management plans to include NRE goals and objectives that would compliment FDR goals. Manager Finney disagreed with R. Harnack's assessment of TP14.

### **Administrator Report**

#### **A) Project Team Support**

For fiscal year 2011 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011), the Work Group allocated each project team \$15,000 for project team expenses. The following project team reimbursement requests have been disbursed to date: Bois de Sioux WD - \$15,000; Buffalo-Red River WD - \$15,000; Middle Snake Tamarac WD - \$15,000; Red Lake WD - \$12,721; Roseau River WD - \$1,950; Sand Hill River WD - \$4,734; Two Rivers WD - \$2,848; and Wild Rice WD - \$7,003.

#### **B) WORK-IN-KIND (WIK) Crediting Guidance**

N. Erickson distributed a draft spreadsheet that was developed to document WIK contributions for the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). The expenses contributed towards WIK include work performed after June 04, 2008.

#### **C) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Wednesday, April 20, 2011, 9:30 a.m., MnDOT (Rm B109), Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (3RA) Retention Committee**, Monday, April 25, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Moore Engineering, Inc., West Fargo, ND.

3. **Red River Basin Commission's Retention Tour**, Tuesday, April 26, 2011. Buses will leave from the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, ND, promptly at 10:00 a.m.

### **Water Quality Project Monitoring Report**

Wayne Goeken, Director-Center for Watershed Education (IWI) reported that the River Watch Forum was held on March 17<sup>th</sup> at the UMC campus. Fifteen schools and ~150 people attended. More hands-on interactive sessions were presented and were very popular.

W. Goeken added that he is working with Annette Drewes to align River Watch activities and lesson plans to Minnesota State Science Standards.

### **Red River Basin Commission**

Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator – RRBC, distributed Information on the Upstream Water Retention Tour scheduled for Tuesday, April 26, 2011. Buses load at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds at 9:00 a.m., with the tour concluding at ~6:00 p.m. The tour date and route is predicated on the flooding situation in the basin and road conditions.

### **Red River Coordinator/TAC Report**

D. Thul reviewed the proposed changes to the Project Management Plan (PMP) of the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). The following items were suggested additions to the WIK spreadsheet developed for the WFS: Develop unsteady HEC-RAS and HEC-HMS models for the Red River upstream of Halstad, MN (\$1,050,000); Technical review of the HEC-HMS modeling products (\$120,000 for MN, \$120,000 for ND); 50% (annual) cost of USACE regulatory staff member to be located in Fargo/Moorhead, \$187,000 per year; and Phase IV Red River Basin Decision Information Network (RRBDIN), \$273,000.

The proposed USACE position was discussed. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to wait until the 3RA has finalized the position description before approving a local match for WIK. The board confirmed they would not support directly funding a USACE regulatory position. It was agreed that upon 3RA approval of the position, the board would consider providing a local match for WIK should it not eliminate the match to be utilized for higher priority tasks.

D. Thul also suggested adding the two-phased proposal presented by the BTSAC authorized earlier today at an estimated cost of \$60,000 as a WIK task. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed this task should also be included in the additions to the PMP.

Thul stated that he would forward the comments received at today's meeting to the USACE to be incorporated into a revised PMP.

### **District Reports**

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation has halted construction on Phase 2 of the project until weather permits.

Signing of the Operation and Maintenance agreement for the Palmville Flood Damage Reduction & Fen Restoration Project is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup>. The agreement is between the District, Roseau County and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

- The Red Lake WD reported on a proposed boundary change with the Sand Hill River Watershed District. A meeting was conducted to discuss the proposed change and following approval by both districts, a petition will be submitted to the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) for a boundary change. At the request of Beltrami County, the Red Lake WD has another boundary petition application pending which will remove approximately 2,200 acres which is presently in the District but will be transferred to the Mississippi Watershed.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project. The Board of Managers decided to proceed with the revised project. The DNR has requested repayment of the \$660,000 that was submitted for the original project design. The District is currently working with local banks to secure a loan to repay the funding advance. The Board of Managers has submitted a Step 1 application to the Red River Watershed Management Board for consideration.

### **District's Funding Requests**

#### **1. Wild Rice WD / Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project (Option D) / Step I Submittal**

The information required for a Step I submittal was distributed. Kevin Ruud invited the Board of Managers to conduct their regular May board meeting in Ada, MN in order to facilitate a tour of the project. Following discussion, the board agreed to schedule the May 17, 2011 board meeting at the Wild Rice WD office in Ada, MN.

The next meeting will be on May 17, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, 11 5th Avenue East, Ada, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerome Deal  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator